



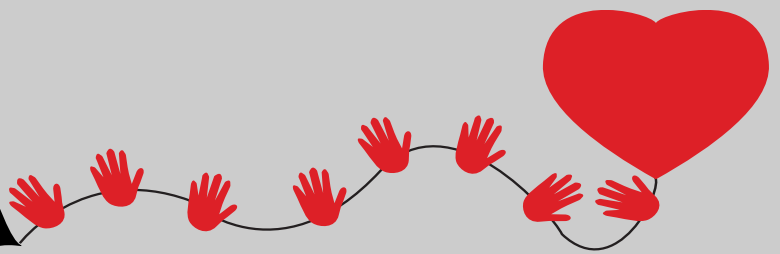
Maricopa County CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocate Program Newsletter

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Spring 2002



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Jackie Flowers

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 17, 11:30 a.m. –
Community Awareness
Event and Jan Lindsey
Award Presentation, Phoenix
Country Club

June 6, 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Case Selection Meeting —
Juvenile Court Complex —
Durango, Juvenile Probation
Administration Building,
Room 223

June 8, 8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
— Juvenile Probation
Training for CASAs, State
CASA Office

**June 25, 11:30 a.m. – 1
p.m.** — Juvenile Court
Presiding Judge Linda Scott
hosts a brown bag lunch at
the Juvenile Court Complex
— Southeast Mesa Facility,
Yucca Conference Room

July 20 — Foster Parent
Training

**Please RSVP to our main
office for all events:
602.506.4083**

Spring events shine light on CASA program

The CASA program has sprung into increased recruiting efforts while taking time to honor volunteers who generously provide for the needs of some of the county's most severely abused and neglected children.

The first "Celebrate the Light" event kicked off the recruitment season on a sunny Saturday afternoon in early April and was followed a couple of weeks later with Superior Court's Law Day celebration. CASA volunteer efforts were recognized during the annual honorary ceremony and a special CASA was recognized during the Law Day event.

The inaugural CASA "Celebrate the Light" was an eye opening and moving tribute of hope for abused, abandoned and neglected children across the Valley and state.

Among the special events to recognize April as National Child Abuse Prevention and



Arizona Cardinals mascot Big Red entertains a child at the Inaugural CASA Celebrate the Light ceremony.

Awareness Month, was the lighting of a ceremonial mural, which CASA Program Manager Bonnie Marcus said had special symbolism. She explained the mural showed how one hand can reach into darkness to bring a ray of light

and hope to another person's life.

Juvenile Court Presiding Judge Linda Scott asked the audience to try to visualize how many children in Arizona

Continued Page 5

Q&A from Judge Linda Scott

Presiding Juvenile Court Judge

Q At a recent brown bag lunch with Judge Scott, conversation turned to children 12 and older wanting to attend their dependency hearings. Can you explain if a child wants to attend a hearing, is it mandatory for the CPS Case Manager to provide transportation for the child to the hearing?

A Arizona Revised Statute states that the Court shall

provide notice of the periodic review hearings and notice of the right to participate to several parties, including the child if over 12 years old. This notice is not necessarily given directly to the child, but may go through the child's attorney or guardian ad litem. Therefore, a child over 12 has a right to notice of the hearings and a right to participate, but is not required to be present. If the



child wants to be present, the CASA should talk to the case manager about bringing the child to Court. If the case manager refuses or says that it is not their job, the CASA can write a letter to the assigned judge, with copies to all parties.

The CASA should explain that the child wants to attend Court, suggest whether the child should attend Court, and ask the Court to order CPS to transport the child to the hearing if the Court determines that the child should be there.

Nonprofit organization fills gaps between basic needs, essential extras

Bonnie Marcus CASA Program Manager

It is unfortunate for children in foster care that some benefits widely considered essential fall outside of their basic needs and are hard to fulfill.

Tutoring, karate lessons, camp costs and airfare to visit relatives are examples of expenses the Department of Economic Security cannot pay for in the management of a case.

However, they are examples of what is available to CASA children through the Maricopa County Chapter of Arizona Council for CASA, Inc. (ACCI). A statewide nonprofit organization, ACCI was created to benefit the CASA Program and the

children served by CASA volunteers. ACCI is dedicated to enhancing the lives of dependent children by meeting needs that may go unmet by the system that cares for them.

Examples of requests that have been granted by ACCI include a request from Native-American CASA children to travel to the reservation to connect with relatives; a CASA child to receive tutoring to bring her up to grade level with her peers; and a father to travel to Arizona to visit

with his son.

ACCI requests are handled by board members that include past and present CASA volunteers and community members. ACCI holds fund-raising efforts throughout the year: some

include the CASA house project, a program that would provide a place that can be used for visitations between CASAs and their CASA children.

The purpose of the CASA house is to establish an atmosphere that is relaxed and more homelike than a sterile CPS office, and different than a McDonalds

Aid to CASA - Part I

A continuing series highlighting the organizations that support the CASA Program

special events and some ongoing fund-raising projects. The largest of these events include a major golf outing and an art auction. Fund-raising efforts include the sale of lapel pins depicting children of all kinds, and a cookbook. Future projects

or a park.

Requests for funds can be submitted to your CASA Coordinator.

More information regarding ACCI is available through the CASA office. The group plans a newsletter and a Web site in the near future.

CASAs can be surrogate parents

CASAs advocating for children who need special education services may be able to become the child's surrogate parent, according to federal law.

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Act, a child who is a ward of the state, who has been identified as learning disabled and whose parents cannot be identified or located, is eligible to have a surrogate parent appointed.

Grizelda Valenzuela, Special Education Mediator with the Arizona Department of Education, said the surrogate parent for the child tracks the child's process through the special education process.

"A Surrogate Parent is needed when a child is

in need of someone to represent him or her in the special education process," said Valenzuela. "The surrogate parent has all the rights and responsibilities of a parent under this federal law."

Qualified candidates to fill this court appointed role must be trained in special education processes and pass a fingerprint background check.

Valenzuela, who is also a surrogate parent trainer, said the four-hour training sessions are free to trainees.

Those interested in becoming a surrogate parent, or those who have questions about the program, call Grizelda Valenzuela at 480-893-9216.

Financial options for placements

By Claudia Noye
CASA Volunteer

Securing adequate funding to meet the various needs of the children is one of the primary concerns for many placements.

There are many choices available, including Kindercare, Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), welfare and various subsidies for guardianship, foster care and adoption. You need to research which option offers the most income for the family of your particular case. For instance, if the case plan is legal guardianship, you might be able to help arrange

extra income by looking into the guardianship subsidy. In my particular case, the grandmother is caring for four grandchildren. The subsidy went from \$340 per month through TANF to over \$1,000 per month.

The contact person for guardianship subsidy is Dolores Coates, and she can be reached at 602-263-9018. The application can be approved within a few days.

In my case, the grandmother with guardianship of her four grandchildren is eagerly awaiting her first check. She hopes to purchase playground equipment for the children!

A letter from a foster sister

Heather S. Foster sister

He was the cutest little boy I had ever seen. He had blonde curly hair on his head. His eyes were the clearest blue you've ever seen, and his face was always smudged. This was Joey, my two-year-old little brother who came into my life in September 2000.

I would never have imagined that my family would participate in foster care. At that time, my youngest sibling was seven, and it had been five years since there had been a two-year-old in the family. It all happened the day my mom went to go see some kids with a CPS worker.

"I couldn't leave him there. We're on our way home. He is so cute, blonde hair, blue eyes. They gave me a crib and a car seat, but other than that, he only has the clothes on his back," said my mom.

I remember his first dinner in our home. The only time I saw him breath was

in between servings. We just sat and stared, sometimes commenting on whether or not he had eaten in the last year. That night, we discovered his passion for cars. That was the first word we heard him say. Over the next week, we also heard him say "mom," "dad," "no,"

and "hurt you." Joey was very scared of our dogs and would scream and say, "hurt you" when they got near. Joey

was very clingy, at first just to toys, but after about a month, Mom was not allowed out of his sight. One of the things I remember most is his screaming bloody murder when he was left in the crib alone. Some nights, when my Mom left, he would scream for hours. Joey warmed up to our family quickly. We all had a special bond with him. And we all loved to spoil him. He

had fire engines, copters,

trucks, trailer trucks, race cars and "verta cars" (convertibles), vans, buses and "choo choos." For Christmas, he got a bike but he was sure that the big "verta car" in the front yard was his and not my sister's. Within a week after she got it, he was able to step

on the back wheel, climb over the window and get into the car.

He would sit in there for hours, pretending

to drive.

Joey was taken from his mother because she was a drug addict and didn't know what she was doing. When we first got him, he didn't talk, he didn't even cry. We had Joey living with us for almost a year. By the time he left, he loved dogs, could speak in sentences and was almost potty trained.

In August 2001, Joey went to live with

his Aunt Betty permanently. His parents are never allowed to see him again. It's been six months and we think about him all the time. It was so hard for us to see him leave. We will be able to visit him sometime. They said by Christmas, but because he was so attached to us, we have to wait longer. I am so thankful to be able to have had the chance to have Joey live with us for the short time he did. He also made me see how blessed I am, to be born into a great home with wonderful parents. We all love and miss him very much.

Heather S. wrote this letter as part of a class assignment, which was write about something or someone that had affected her life immensely. The names were changed to maintain confidentiality.

“He made me see how blessed I am, to be born into a great home with wonderful parents.”

Coordinator's Corner

By Rita Flores

A few weeks ago, I was so excited to upgrade my cellular plan to include unlimited minutes on the weekend. I now have free access and no time restraints, to communicate with long distant family members and friends.

My daughter has enjoyed the last few weekends talking with her cousin and not hearing me say, "it's time to get off now."

I view our organization as a family – a CASA family in which we also need to keep communication flowing. We all have one purpose in mind, and are united in that purpose. As a Coordinator, it thrills me when I receive a phone call from a volunteer asking for help on his or her court report or just



needing a question answered. Two heads are always better than one.

Sometimes, I may not have the answer and we might need to do some digging. Other times, we may figure the answer out as we talk. Communicating with your Coordinator is essential, even if you are a volunteer who has not yet set a goal of submitting contact logs on a monthly basis. Not as essential as working the case, but more so than you may have supposed. When I attended CPS core

training, the trainers emphasized to new case managers that it is important when making a decision about a family to discuss the decision with their supervisor. Collaborating with the supervisor gives the case manager another perspective and an outlook based on someone else's experience. What you share with your Coordinator may benefit another volunteer dealing with the same issue. We're all learning together.

As Esperanza Tavena, staff person whom we call ET, would say, "Phone home."

Golf program affordable, accessible to CASA youth

*From Dana Gilroy
CASA Volunteer*

CASAs trying to teach life's positive lessons to their CASA children can now look to the greens for examples.

With a \$5 registration fee, children between the ages of 8-18 can receive six weeks of golf instruction, playing privileges and practice clubs through The First Tee Program at the

Thunderbirds Golf Club in south Phoenix.

I have taken a CASA child for about 4 weeks now, and am very impressed with this program.

Participation in sports in general, golf in particular, has the potential to teach youth society's esteemed values: responsibility, respect, integrity and

confidence.

The program is specially designed to make golf affordable and accessible to inner city youth.

Children who participate receive six lessons (one lesson per week), and can proceed to different playing levels through the six-week session. For more information you can contact

The CASA Program says goodbye to Mavis Monson, a valued member of the CASA Program support staff. We wish you well, Mavis.

Peer Group Meetings

Scottsdale - Last Wednesday of every month, Home of MaryLou Davis 1p.m.

East Valley Peer Group - Third Thursday of every month, 6:30 p.m.- 8 p.m. Hosted by Greg Broberg.

Central Phoenix - Third Wednesday of Every Month, Alternating between hosts: Marcia Rysdon, 6:30 p.m. Doreen Sweiss, 6:30 p.m.

Please RSVP to our main office for all events:
602.506.4083

CASA Kudos

From the Foster Care Review Board:

The Foster Care Review Board commended the following CASAs for their continued commitment to the children on their cases:

- Mary F. Christofolo
- Robert Brunson
- Janet Ofodile
- Judy Stratford
- Linda Warfield
- Terry Doepken
- Tricia Ruiz
- Lynne Rinde
- Til Dunlop
- Lynne Rinde

From Court and staff:

Judge David R. Cole commended CASA **Daniel Miller**

in a minute entry stating: "The Court expresses its appreciation to Daniel R. Miller for his involvement in the child's life and the recommendations on his behalf."

Judge Alan Kamin commended **Mary Christofolo** for her court report and thanked her for the information she extended.

Judge Thomas Dunevant commended CASA Karen Jensen for her efforts on behalf of her CASA children.

Judge Janet Barton praised CASA **Theresa O'Connor** for her quick rapport with the children and commended her on her court

report and efforts on the case.

Judge William Sargeant expressed his appreciation in court of **Joe and Vicky Orlando**, and stated that he is always appreciative of and enjoys CASAs on his cases.

From CPS:

Case Manager for CASA **Brenda Cox's** case said that Brenda is an excellent CASA. She sees the children all the time and keeps an open line of communication with the CPSCM.

CASA **Marcia L. Rysdon** was commended by Case Manager **Jennifer Ingalls** who reported that Marcia as an

outstanding CASA who exceptionally comprehends her role as a children's advocate.

From a Relative Placement:

CASA **Deanna Williamson** was thanked by the aunt of her CASA children for "sharing her interest and love and keeping the children in mind the way she does, bringing joy into their lives."

Guardian Ad Litem:

Maria Marrero, social worker for Guardian Ad Litem **William Owsley** commended CASA **Lynne Rinde** for her commitment to the child on her case.

Happy Birthday CASAs

April

Rochelle Kelman, Beth Broeker, Janet Kirkpatrick, Deanne Norton, Robert Herrmann, Mary Ann Stanton, Joanna Antosz, Mort Leith, Yvonne Sleight, Joan Lowry, G. Malinda Harlan, Lee Milanich,

David Brown, Joseph Orlando, Barbara Bean, Brenda Cox, Til Dunlop, Kathryn Gill, Susan Davenport, Jacquelyn Flowers, Lynda Jo Taylor.

May

Patricia Willis, Melissa A. Knowlton, Margaret Diaz, Edwin L. Jones, Joy Spears, Lisa Nguyen, Susan Putney,

Deana Reinhardt, Barbara Karim, Myndi Kort, Gregory B. Broberg, Bill Oldham, Johnna Alba, Terry Doepken, Lynne Rinde

June

June Anderson, Amy Auffret, Brenda Bauer, Celeste Bennett, Elaine Burns, Ray Cheroske, Dana Gilroy, Carolyn Hubbard,

Charlie Johnson, Kathe Kalmansohn, John Lare, Amy Locklear, Eva Meyer, Betty Oves, Shirley Polk, Charlotte Rauchfuss, Susan E. Russell, Eileen Schioppa, Stephanie Seppanen, Kristin Simerdla, Liz Smithhart, Florette Smithiger, Lisa Sullivan, Sherri Tinney, Melanie Turrell



CASA Mentor Jackie Flowers (third from left) was one of 11 Court volunteers honored during Superior Court Law Day.

live in abusive situations.

All of the children standing in a line would be three miles long.

Another speaker, Misty Snow, shared her personal pain and experience of not being able to live with her biological parents. Instead, as a young child, she lived in and out of home care.

Lively music and dance by Ballet Folklorico helped brighten the event as did the jazz band, Unique, which performed a special song for children. A high school duet sang an original ballad about CASA.

Various child abuse prevention agencies participated in the event, distributing information on children's issues and ways for the public to become involved.

"We appreciate all CASA volunteers who participated in making the event a success and reached out to encourage others to volunteer to the program," Marcus said. "We plan to expand the event next year to reach more people in our community."

During the Superior Court Law Day event on May



Presiding Juvenile Court Judge Linda Scott (right) and CASA Program Manager Bonnie Marcus stand near the "Celebrate the Light" mural.

I, CASA volunteer and mentor Jackie Flowers was one of 11 volunteers honored for their dedication to the administration of justice. Flowers has been making a difference for abused and neglected children since 1986. CASA staff members also were on hand to recruit more volunteers.

The special CASA Volunteer Recognition Ceremony, titled "Field of Dreams," honored many valued CASA volunteers at a Saturday brunch. Beth Rosenberg received the Light of Hope Award, Marcia Rysdon was named the Volunteer of the Year and Superior Court Judge William Sargeant III was named the Judge of the Year.

2002 Volunteer Awards

"Field of Dreams"

Light of Hope Award

Beth Rosenberg

Judge of Year

Honorable William P. Sargeant, III

Volunteer of Year

Marcia Rysdon

Rookie of the Year

Stacey Beebe

CASA Project Pioneer

Angela Ashley

Speakers Bureau Recognition

Golden Microphone Award Recipients:

Greg Broberg, Robert Brunson, Peiggi Clements, Barbara Karim, James Lee, Marshall Porter

Other Speakers Bureau Members Acknowledged:

June Anderson, Jane Ascheman, Stacey Beebe, Ray Cherosky, Georgi Gold, Adele James, Ann Murphy, Deanne Norton, Kathleen Norton, Marilyn Priebe, Mary Ann Stanton

Mentor Recognition

Greg Broberg, Beverley Burch, Peiggi Clements, Anne Donahoe, Margo Fitts, Jackie Flowers, Dana Gilroy, Hart Gottliebson, Lynda Pederson, Linda Warfield

Community Support Awards

Arizona Council for CASA, Inc.

Blankets for Kids

Kappa Alpha Theta

Polymicro Technologies



CASA Contacts and Information

Locations

Program Staff

Durango

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Leslie Blakley	602.506.4082
La Donna Moss	602.506.3930
Laurie Laughlin	602.506.3934
Bonnie Lodato	602.506.6491
Esperanza Tavena	602.506.4415
Otis R. Evans	602.506.4425

Southeast

1810 South Lewis Street
Mesa, AZ 85210

Rita Flores	602.506.3935
Bonnie Marcus	602.506.3379


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